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the *tinuato* wanders around near the place of death and makes its presence known by a low whistle. Although it has no malignant qualities, it is regarded with great fear.

There is no belief in life after death (except for the ghost), in rewards or punishments, or in any deity. It is interesting to observe that for the missionised native it is the *tinuato* which goes to hell, and it is this also which has become the Christian soul.

These people, until very recently, were cannibals. All the adults of the community in which I lived had been cannibals before the white government stopped the practice. But it was only the bodies of enemies killed in warfare which were eaten, and never the body of a friend, relative, or member of the same village. As far as could be ascertained, there was no theory of imbibing the strength of the enemy warrior. It was merely another meat dish in a diet which was mostly vegetable.[4]

Cremation rather than burial was formerly practised, but as far as could be learned there has been no change in the rites. In the past the body was burned and the bones buried. The cemeteries existed then just as they do to-day—each hamlet with its own. In the rites to-day cremation is simply omitted and the whole body is buried instead of just the bones, as in the past.[5]

The following description, covering the three chronological periods, brings out the divisions among the survivors who are grouped according to their kinship to the dead person, their degree of mourning and their responsibility for the rites.

## PREPARATIONS BEFORE DEATH

In the period immediately preceding death there is even then a selection of certain relatives who will perform special duties towards the dying person. It is always the parents or children who take care of the sick person. Before death occurs, it is to the house of the parents or children that the patient is moved. The spouse is very attentive also, and the rest of the community show their interest by cooking in the hamlet of the sick person and by dis-

[4]However, one can never completely trust information gathered from hearsay only, and with no opportunity to observe the phenomenon itself.

[5]White control is responsible for the change.

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continuing dance rehearsals. A woman just past middle age named Kawitti died rather unexpectedly. The night before her death she left her husband's house and went to her sister's son's house close by. Her own son was away at a distant village. Two other old women, one of whom did die, while the other recovered, went immediately to the houses of their respective daughters. Two younger women who were very ill went to their respective mother's house. In each case the mother or the daughter affectionately cared for the sick person. But this did not prevent the husband of a sick woman from being attentive also. When Pulong was ill her husband roamed the bush looking for delicacies such as sugar cane, or made a new bamboo bed for her, or supported her while she sat up. When Nunda, an old woman, was ill and expected to die all the women of the neighbouring hamlets brought their cooking to the compound in front of the house where she was lying. The night before the death of a young man, Waketei, the women of the village did not have their dance rehearsal, which had been held nightly for the past month. In one case, that of the death of the old woman, Maling, preparations for the mortuary feast were begun before she actually died. Her grandson in the female line went to a nearby village where the fishing was very good and made arrangements to secure a large catch for the expected mortuary feast.

## BURIAL

Immediately the death occurs the rites begin in earnest. Wailing starts at the moment life leaves the body. While everyone in the community wails, there is a difference in the intensity and duration of their wailing. The consort, the parents, the children are the chief mourners and wail the most. Next come the other clan relatives, and after them the rest of the village.[6]

The wailing is interrupted by the carrying of the corpse to the sea to be washed. This is always done by people of the same sex

[6]Should the children be absent at the time of the death, they return with all possible haste. The members of the same clan as the dead native will travel (walk) to distant villages for the funeral, sometimes as much as thirty or forty miles. Their consorts frequently accompany them, but it is always clear that these are in the position of satellites.